



Nettalk

Free East Timor Coalition

UPDATE (11) - April 1998

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Nino Konis Santana — Tragic Death

The death of guerrilla leader Konis Santana is a serious political setback for the East Timorese resistance, Nobel peace laureate José Ramos Horta said on March 30.

Santana died of injuries suffered in an accidental fall into a ravine on March 11 in the East Timorese mountains.

Commander of the East Timorese national liberation forces, Santana "was not only a military leader but a true political leader in the tradition of Xanana Gusmao", Ramos Horta said.

He was certain that the movement would find a successor to Santana. "The chief command of the struggle and people of East Timor has always, over the past 23 years, found leaders within the resistance movement."

Santana had been named commander of the guerrilla forces in 1993, following the arrest of Gusmao and Ma'Huno, Gusmao's immediate successor.

A former school teacher, a leader of the East Timorese students association until 1975, Konis Santana had been in the



mountains since the invasion.

Ramos Horta describes him as an architect of East Timorese national unity, reconciliation and tolerance, who was acutely aware of international developments and an unconditional supporter of the three-phased CNRM peace initiative.

Taur Matan Ruak, Santana's deputy has since been appointed Commander. He

praised Santana's work in reorganising the resistance after Xanana's capture including consolidating the guerilla presence in the west and reinstalling radio communications with the outside world:

"May the people and the history of this country never forget for generations and may God Almighty honour his presence in His kingdom..." *

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NZ diplomats visit East Timor — their findings remain secret

By Maire Leadbeater —
Auckland ETIC

All the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would say about the visit of Embassy staff to East Timor in August last was that the 'major objective of the visit was to pursue our development assistance policies and activities.'

The Auckland East Timor Independence Committee was dismayed by the refusal to release the delegation report — a departure from previous practice of having reports released with details that could identify individuals blacked out by the censor's pen.

Ironically the only other information we have gleaned about the visit came via the Internet and translations from the Indonesian Antara news service where Second Secretary Tessa Temata was quoted as saying in Baucau, that 'Indonesia is an important partner for her country.' Comments ascribed to her in an Antara report from Dili suggest she was agreeing that the information circulating on the Internet about the death of David Alex was not true.

Representation to the Ombudsman for the information to be released also failed — Chief Ombudsman Sir Brian Elwood insisted that under Section 6 of the Official Information Act he had no statutory power to consider 'countervailing public interest provisions' when the government has decided that there



Watch out! Latent danger!

are 'conclusive reasons for withholding official information'. Sir Brian's judgement concluded that there was a likelihood that disclosure would prejudice the Government's international relations.

Sir Brian alludes to records of 'observations' made by East Timorese people and to an assessment by a New Zealand official of the situation in East Timor.

We argued that this information could be highly significant — 'It is part of democratic life that the public be made aware of Government policy decisions and the reasons and justifications for the decisions.'

Why is Foreign Affairs so worried about releasing the New Zealand official's assessment of

the situation in East Timor - does it reflect an assessment that Indonesia would not like?

'If it is the case that there is a discrepancy between the public and non-public statements about East Timor, this would imply that the public are being excluded from involvement in the formation of our foreign policy. Should the public not have the same right to information and to genuine participation in debating the issues, in respect of foreign policy as they do in matters of domestic policy?'

When it comes to foreign policy it seems the Official Information Act is more like the Official Secrets Act. A short item in *The New Zealand Herald* of March 26, 1998 recorded our unsuccessful saga. ●

Third conference on East Timor held in Bangkok

In March, the third Asia-Pacific Conference on East Timor (APCET) was held in Bangkok, Marie Laufiso of CORSO, Dunedin, attended along with about 50 other participants. She reports on what happened.

Ten East Timorese attended from within Timor and from Australia and Portugal, while the rest of us came from Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Nepal, Malaysia, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Spain, Portugal, Finland, Canada, Australia, America, and Aotearoa.

Unlike APCET II (Malaysia, 1996), this conference was not closed down by the authorities. This was largely due to the efforts of the Thai organizers, who made successful use of the new constitution.

APCET III was preceded by a two day International symposium on a Peaceful Settlement for East Timor (PEACE-SET). Under pressure from the Thai government PEACE-SET was held at the YMCA instead of Chulalongkorn University. On the first day of PEACE-SET (March 2), the Labour Department was threatening to arrest foreign participants who, if they spoke from the stage, were deemed to be working without a permit! So we simply stopped using the stage.

Labour Department officials, however, took photos and videoed parts of the conference. APCET III was delayed by local police wanting to access names of all foreign participants. Eventually the diplomacy of the Thai organisers and their supporters triumphed, and APCET III commenced at about 6.30pm, March 4.

APCET III involved four panel

discussions: (1) East Timor in the midst of Indonesian economic and political torment, (2) Women, (3) Youth and (4) Development in East Timor. While the Youth and Women's presentations were made by members of RENETIL (National Resistance of East Timor Students), the first panel was made up of both East Timorese and Indonesian speakers. The development presentation was made mainly by Agio Pereira, Executive Director of the East Timor Relief Association (ETRA).

As we had lost a day, some presentations were curtailed. Reports from APCET affiliates were circulated and specific issues on development, advocacy, and international solidarity were highlighted. As well, STTM (Solidaritas Timor Timur Malaysia) reported that a civil suit was due to be filed by the organizers of APCET II. Of particular note was a discussion on the ethics of the use of torture photos purchased from the Indonesian military. After extensive debate some groups had chosen not to use these.

We then split into three workshop groups: (1) development strategies, (2) advocacy campaigning and lobbying, and (3) organisation-building and strengthening partnership between East Timorese and solidarity groups. At the plenary session the resolutions of both PEACE-SET and APCET III were discussed and confirmed. There were two caucus meetings: Women

and Muslims.

The Women's caucus chose two representatives for the APCET Council: an East Timorese woman, Ines Almeida, of ETRA, and a woman from the solidarity movements, Elizabeth Wong, from Malaysia.

Friday March 6, saw the presentation by a small delegation of a letter to Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary General care of his Thai representative. At the press conference it was announced, as part of the conference statement, that APCET IV will be held in Jakarta in 2000.

This indicates an extremely optimistic outlook on the future, and if this is to happen we will all need to work harder on many fronts. This means especially more support for both the East Timorese independence movement and the Indonesian pro-democracy movement. Of immediate note is the Convention of East Timorese people in Lisbon April 23 to 27, 1998.

Preceding this will be a Women's Convention and this is a crucial development, as women comprise 53% of East Timor's population. Later this year a Congress will be held December 6 to 12, also in Lisbon.

I would like to acknowledge the endurance of the People of East Timor, and the hard work and graciousness of both the Thai organizers and APCET Secretariat members. Given that this was an Asia-Pacific conference, I personally missed the presence of more Pacific people but understand the need for the peoples of South East Asian region to have claimed the struggle of East Timor as their own. Further I acknowledge all the solidarity groups everywhere as well as Corso who ensured that I as a Pacific woman could attend. *

No Positive Improvements in East Timor Yet

"For me 1997 has not brought any positive improvements which have contributed to the resolution of the East Timor issue", Bishop Belo introducing the East Timor Human Rights Centre, (ETHRC), Annual Report of human rights violations in East Timor, 1997.

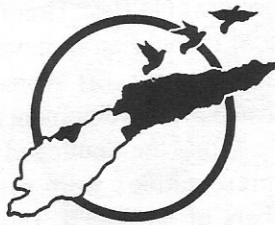
It is a sad commentary on a year which opened hopefully with East Timor prominent on the international agenda because the 1996 Nobel peace prize was awarded jointly to Bishop Belo and José Ramos Horta. Positive 1997 developments were the appointment of Jamsheed Marker as the UN Secretary General's Special Representative, a strong resolution in April from the UN Commission on Human Rights, and a new initiative from President Mandela. The UN talks between Portugal and Indonesia are now being held more frequently involving senior diplomats meeting in confidential sessions — no breakthroughs were announced.

Inside East Timor the violence escalated: the Catholic Church in Dili reported that it accepted 339 of the 451 allegations of human rights violations that it received in 1997.

From the 1997 ETHRC Report

Arbitrary detentions:

At least 771 — many as a result of the intensified military activity in response to the violence surrounding the Indonesian election in May.



East Timor Human Rights Centre

Torture and ill-treatment:

At least 155 East Timorese cases documented.

Extrajudicial executions:

At least 52 were killed by the security forces

Disappearances:

Many later clarified as cases of arbitrary detention. Three East Timor students disappeared after a crackdown by security forces on the campus of the Dili university in November.

Unfair trials and the death penalty:

Indonesia uses repressive laws which mean that people can be convicted for 'hate sowing' against the Government. Legal services are scarce and the judiciary and police are subordinated to military control. In December, two East Timorese men were sentenced to death in Baucau. The convictions relate to their alleged involvement in

the May Falantil attack on a truck carrying military and police, part of the wave of violence which took place at the time of the Indonesian elections.

Between 15,000 and 20,000 troops are stationed in East Timor (other sources refer to 30,000), and their activities are complemented by paramilitary organisations such as the GARDAPAKSI — a youth group trained by the elite KOPASSUS forces. No member of the Indonesian military was prosecuted for human rights violations in 1997.

Indonesia's National Human Rights Commission has its office opposite the military headquarters and while it makes critical reports, its statements have had no appreciable impact.

No international human rights group other than the ICRC, (Red Cross) was given access to East Timor despite pleas for greater access from the UN Human Rights Commission. The UNCHR has been trying to get agreement for a UN officer based in Jakarta to be given access to East Timor to undertake human rights monitoring.

The ETHRC questions the effectiveness of this proposal for human rights monitoring at a distance — and suggests instead the importance of opening up to international human rights NGOs and the establishment of a permanent UN presence in East Timor.

Continued on page 5

Ramos Horta — Cautious Optimism for 1998



continued from page 4

The theme of Jose Ramos Horta's speeches has been cautious optimism — daring to hope that the Indonesian crisis presents a 'historic opportunity' if the international community would only seize the moment to insist on peace initiatives.

He has criticised the IMF economic bailout as directed at rescuing the dictatorship and alerted the world to dire food crisis in East Timor and the results of the drought in many regions. Latest reports say that 5,000 villagers are facing food shortages due to crop failures and are trying to survive on sago, leaves and tubers. There are also unconfirmed reports of 85 deaths from starvation in the village of Fefudin.

A serious outbreak of dengue fever has resulted in many deaths.

Ramos Horta has called for an end to hostilities by Indonesian forces and Timorese resistance groups. In reflecting on the events that led to the 1975 Indonesian invasion he has suggested that the Fretilin resistance leaders of the time 'also bear responsibility' for the way the events of the 1975 civil war 'unfolded'.

"The economic and financial

crisis in Indonesia and the region is without precedent, and Indonesia cannot continue the military occupation in East Timor as it has been," Mr Ramos-Horta said in a BBC radio interview. "If it does not respond to the olive branch I am proposing, there could be an escalation of violence in East Timor."

Sources within East Timor continue to report military operations aimed at intimidating the people they believe to be supporting the guerrillas. On January 13 the bodies of four East Timorese men were found floating in a stream in Atabae west of Dili. They had been abducted by a gang understood to be supported by the military.

East Timorese students are targeted both in Indonesia and East Timor. In February 6 students went on trial on charges of 'torturing' three members of the armed forces. They are alleged to have set upon the soldiers on 14 November 1997.

A national Convention of East Timorese political parties and other representative bodies to co-ordinate strategies for carrying the struggle forward is planned for Lisbon in April. It is to be followed by a Congress of Citizenship in December.

A delegation from the European Union is scheduled to visit East Timor in May and to report back to Robin Cook, Britain's Foreign Minister, current EU President. It will be the first such visit since the 1975 invasion.★

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Problems in Indonesia may le

Exiled Indonesian academic and critic George Aditjondro toured New Zealand meetings in Whangarei, Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North and Christchurch as the guest of Te Kawariki on February 6, joining in the final stages of the annual HIL. He met with students, human rights groups, environmentalists and later described two 'jewels' of his visit. The other was his visit to the Lilybank resort of Tomm

Audiences listened in rapt attention to George's account of the Suharto family and the forces for change in Indonesia, including the Peoples Democratic Party (PRD). Dougal Ellis of ETIC, Auckland reports:

Aditjondro sees two recent developments in Indonesia as having the potential for change: the economic crisis and the radicalization of political opposition to the Suharto family. These in turn could have positive or negative effects on democracy in Indonesia and self-determination in East Timor by either assisting in a transition of power towards a more democratic and humane government, or in sparking another security clampdown and its associated brutalities.

Indonesia's economic situation has caused much controversy recently with the currency collapse and the IMF 'rescue' prescriptions. The IMF has targeted the Suharto cliques' business dealings as long overdue for some serious attention and called for some 'tough' economic measures.

Meanwhile, however, ordinary Indonesians are suffering. In February the Jakarta Government forecast that unemployment would reach 8 million or almost 10% of the workforce. Unions forecast 13.5 million, and stress that half the workforce is underemployed.

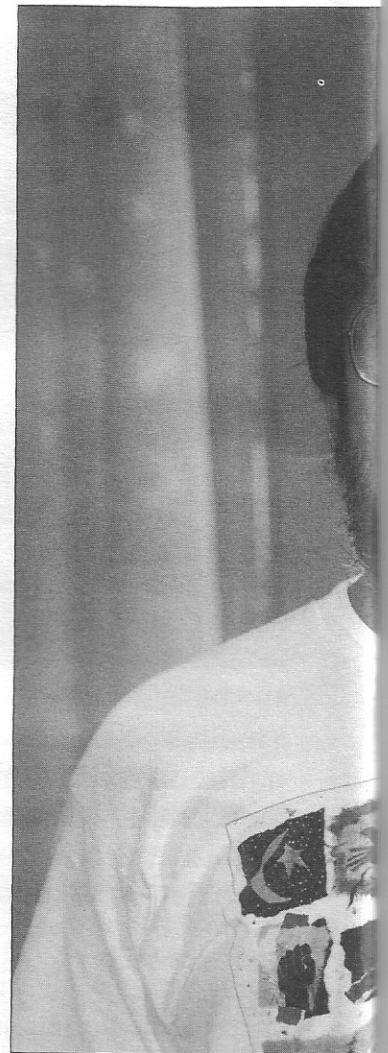
On April 1, three major economic events occurred in Indonesia. The subsidies on petrol and electricity were lifted, and a freeze on pub-

lic sector wages and salaries, including the military, was imposed. When combined with the plummeting of the Indonesian rupiah, such events have created huge economic disruptions for the majority of the Indonesian people. The effects have been seen in newspapers recently with price riots in major towns, attacks on Chinese businesses and protests at universities.

Aditjondro views such economic events as powerful forces for political change, providing the opposition movement in Indonesia can direct protest against the Suharto regime.

Suharto, particularly through his son in law, General Prabowo, is working hard to deflect opposition onto the Chinese, the West and the PRD. The Chinese conglomerates are singled out as convenient scapegoats.

The largest Chinese conglomerate in Indonesia, the Salim group, is 34% owned by the Suharto family and 25% by Chinese interests. Similarly, the Suharto clique has large interests in other Chinese conglomerates as well as controlling their own vast business empire. Nevertheless, when Suharto invited conglomerate bosses to his ranch, to teach them about 'wealth redistribution' and 'social justice', he didn't

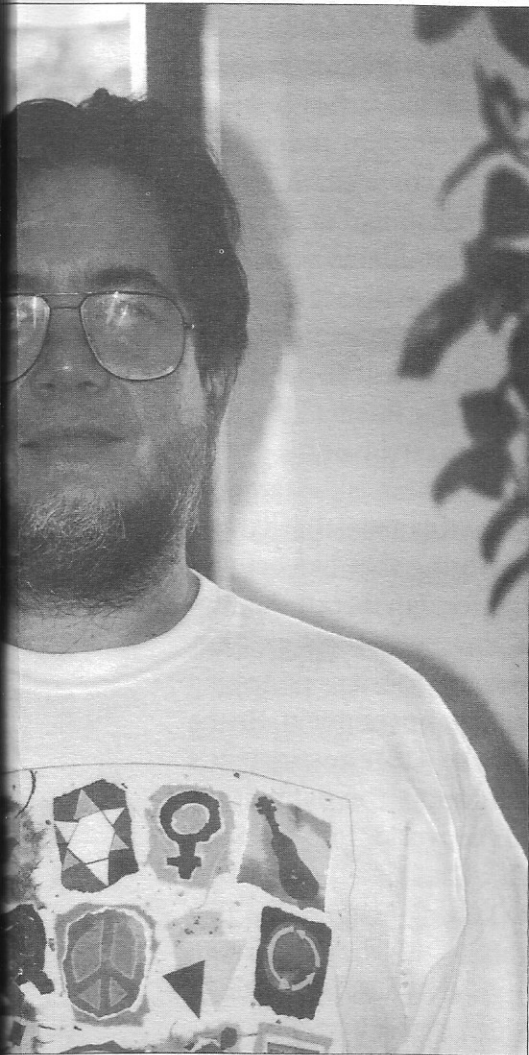


George Aditjondro

invite his own family. Chinese business leader Sofyan Wanana was detained and interrogated early in the year and accused of funding the People's Democratic Movement (PRD).

ad to an Independent East Timor

in February speaking at public
as well as Waitangi, where he was
from the Far North to Waitangi.
his Waitangi experience as one
Suharto in the South Island.*
dubious dealings, the military
RD) and the East Timorese resist-



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On the political front, Aditjondro described several recent developments. First, the formation of the Siago coalition between Megawati Sukarnoputri of the Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI) with Amien

Rais, the leader of the 25 million strong Muhammadiyah Muslim organisation.

These two offered themselves as an alternative to Suharto in the lead up to the Presidential nominations in late March. As an uneasy alliance between the predominantly urban middle class PDI and the more conservative and traditional Javanese Muslim movement, Siago failed to unseat Suharto who was re-elected as President for another five year term. However, it did indicate a shift in Muslim politics and a willingness to embrace the democracy movement as a counter to the power of the Suharto clique and the army. Such a change in Muslim politics has been borne out by other developments.

Gus Dur Abdurahman Wahid is head of the 35 million strong Muslim organisation 'Nahdlatul Ulama'. On November 12, 1996, a number of santri (Islamic students) from Gus Dur's pesantren (religious college) 'Jombang' formed the Indonesian Muslim Community for Timor Loro-Sae. Its programme was to fight for democracy in Indonesia and self-determination in East Timor.

Such goals are also the programme of the PRD, whose leader is currently serving a 13 year jail sentence for the political crime of opposing the constitution. The PRD is by far the more radical of the Indonesian opposition parties and according to Nico Warouw, who toured New Zealand in 1996, is focused firmly on achieving greater democracy and the rule of law in Indonesia. The student/PRD alliance is strongest in East Java and

the cities of Jakarta, Jogjakarta, Bandung, Solo, and Surabaya. The PRD serves the valuable function of providing vigorous and outspoken protest against Suharto's nepotism and corruption and the brutal methods of the Indonesian army.

East Timor plays an important role in anti-Suharto/military protest. Aditjondro claims the militancy of the Timorese has inspired and radicalised Indonesians. The loss of nearly a third of their people since 1975 has not deterred the Timorese from the struggle for justice, and increasingly, Indonesians are learning of the true history of that conflict and making their own assessments.

Aditjondro had high hopes for an alliance between the political protest movement and the economic forces recently unleashed by the currency and other crises. The recent reappointment of Suharto indicates the mainstream opposition movements were not strong enough to unseat his government. However, Suharto's inflexible stance with the IMF and in choosing his cabinet also indicates an unwillingness or an inability to respond to public protests and calls for greater democracy, accountability and less corruption. Blaming the 'communists', foreign interventionists and the Chinese may buy Suharto some time, but it will not solve the economic and political problems of Indonesia.*

*** For the article on George's visit to Lilybank, Tommy Suharto's property in the South Island — see page 10.**

United States military training for Indonesia's crack forces exposed

US Journalist Alan Nairn was deported from Indonesia in March, but not before he had held a press conference and released detailed documentation about previously unknown United States military training courses provided for Indonesia's armed forces.

Nairn revealed that since 1992 the Pentagon has undertaken training for the Indonesian forces through the Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) programme. The Congress cut American military participation in the IMET (International Military Education and Training) programme in 1992 as reaction to the Dili massacre — the programme was later resumed but with a different format concentrating on human rights and civilian defence personnel.

With Congress and public lulled into false complacency, JCET delivered training to Kopassus, the 'Red Berets' special forces command responsible for the most brutal and sadistic torture, and the deaths and disappearances of countless Indonesian and East Timorese civilians.

The list of training courses offered is comprehensive: lethal tactics, such as 'close quarters combat', sniper techniques, demolitions, mortar training, psychological operations and 'military operations in urban terrain'. The Pentagon documents detail 36 exercises involving fully armed US combat troops flying or sailing into Indonesia in the five years between August 1992 and September 1997. Kopassus took part in 20 exercises, including mortar training for the unit of Col

Slamat Sidabatur, the East Timor commander whose troops have conducted torture sessions that were photographed and sold by soldiers for personal gain. (A set of these photos is in our Auckland office).

"Who or what is the target or enemy for this specialised training?" — Megawati

Several Congressmen, including Christopher Smith, have made scathing criticism of the programme: This appears to be a dramatic run around the rules Congress has carefully prescribed for military training and education of Indonesian forces... We have been assured that there is no way the military could use any of this training against the people of East Timor or Irian Jaya... To provide training in 'psy ops' (psychological warfare), sniper training and related subjects to some of the very units that have brutalised the people of East Timor is an obvious violation of this assurance.

Alan Nairn points out that US policy towards the present crisis in Indonesia is based on

pushing Indonesia from old style protected capitalism 'crony style' to an even harsher multinational variety based on 'submission to global markets'. The strategy envisages a post Suharto era, but is firmly based on support for the Indonesian military forces, ABRI, so the programmes aimed at strengthening its formidable repressive capabilities are no accident.

Indonesian opposition leader Megawati Sukarnoputri demanded of President Clinton on March 18:

"Who or what is the target or enemy for this specialised training?" Noting that her country faces no foreign threat, she suggested that the troop's real targets were Indonesians protesting against their government. 'In the light of the US Government's stated support for democracy around the world, I respectfully request an explanation of this secret training programme that contradicts this noble foreign policy goal'. (*New York Times*, March 26, 1998).

A committed journalist, Nairn was at the demonstration which preceded the Dili massacre, and was severely beaten by the military sustaining a skull fracture. On this occasion, he entered the country under his own name challenging the order banning him.*

Indonesia — the gathering storm

Tapol, the UK Indonesian Human Rights Campaign recently called for international solidarity:

"The economic crisis is worsening by the day. The national currency has lost more than 70 per cent of its value since last July. Prices are skyrocketing. Thousands of factories and businesses have closed. Millions have been thrown out of work. Lack of food is threatening in many parts of the country. Deep-rooted corruption, nepotism and cronyism have taken the economy to the brink of catastrophe. The banking system is paralysed, the country is burdened with a foreign debt of more than \$140 billion."

The World Bank has allocated \$3 billion in emergency food and medical aid and has said that since the Second World War, no country has experienced the kind of withdrawal of confidence in its own currency that Indonesia has suffered.

The United Nations Development Programme said that some

7.5 million Indonesians could soon face food shortages. Wages have been frozen at pre-inflation levels, in effect halving real incomes for many. Medicines are in short supply. East Kalimantan is suffering still from fires.

On March 11, President Suharto was re-elected for another term and his new hand-picked cabinet includes his daughter Tutut and key business cronies and corrupt bureaucrats. Bob Hasan, whose conglomerate controls many sectors of the economy is a major figure. Two key armed forces loyalists have moved into cabinet — General Feisal Tanjung and General Wiranto — respectively former and present commander in chief of the armed forces.

The regime is gearing up for increased repression to deal to the new wave of pro-democracy and student mobilisations. The arrests are already well into the

hundreds. The prominent dramatist, Ratna Sarumpaet, has been arrested along with eight others during a pro-democracy gathering in Jakarta.

On March 13, three Peoples Democratic Party leaders were captured in a raid on a tenement flat in Jakarta — they have been charged with subversion which carries a maximum penalty of death, and 'conspiracy to engage in banned activities' - maximum sentence six years. Their 'crimes' consist of carrying out 'mass actions opposed to the government' and carrying out 'meetings, political discussions and organising the masses'.

However, students are demonstrating in their thousands at campuses in Surabaya, Solo, Bandung, Jakarta and Yogyakarta in Java as well as in Bali and Sumatra. Their courage and defiance in the face of military brutality — teargas, truncheons and water cannon — is an inspiration to the wider movement.✻

NZ Response to East Timor

An MA thesis by Dougal Ellis covering the New Zealand response to East Timor will shortly be available through our web page and university libraries. It covers the period from 1975 to 1996 and looks at the relationship between successive New Zealand governments and Indonesia/East Timor from a human rights perspective. The thesis argues that the removal of 'irreversible' in 1995-6 from the

NZ government position on East Timor was a significant policy change and highlighted the anti-human rights nature of the previous 20 years.

Despite the common assumption that New Zealand has had only a minor role in the East Timor conflict, New Zealand governments have been active participants as observers or supporters of Indonesia since 1975. There are low points, such as the

participation by New Zealand in the dubious 'act of self-determination' in 1976 and the acceptance of integration in 1978, to the more positive lobbying by New Zealand officials for aid and humanitarian relief and recent development projects in East Timor.✻

(If you are interested in purchasing a copy of the thesis, write to Auckland ETIC post box or e-mail)

Confrontation at Lilybank

As reported by Joe Davies, Otautahi East Timor Independence Campaign — in CORSO's *Overview* an extract:

Lilybank Lodge lies near the head of Lake Tekapo, about 30kms down a metal road from Tekapo township. The immediate area (about 2,500ha) around the lodge was bought for some \$NZ2.2 million, but Tommy Suharto thought he was buying the whole 27,500 ha station for that price.

Once Tommy Suharto discovered the limits of his purchase, he applied considerable pressure to acquire the rest of the land as well. He probably would have had the lot but for the courageous and dogged opposition of conservationists, including Mountain Safety Council patron Alan Evans, who pressured the then Conservation Minister, Denis Marshall, and forced him to retain the bulk of the land in the conservation estate...

Locals and trampers report numerous incidents with

Lilybank's security staff trying to deny public access to Conservation lands around the Lodge.

Dr Aditjondro travelled there accompanied by a member of the Free East Timor Coalition, posing as an ordinary Indonesian tourist. After successfully negotiating the metal road, the two found themselves having to hike across the braided MacAuley River, nearly coming to grief more than once in the thigh deep water...

Having heard reports of armed guards at the gates, they were relieved to get within 16 metres of the building before being confronted by a man who suddenly emerged from inside. He shouted at the two to get out and demanded to see Dr Aditjondro's passport. Dr Aditjondro ignored his request and, keeping up the pose of in-

nocent tourist, asked to see a brochure so he could 'promote' the lodge among his friends back in Indonesia.

To his surprise, the manager did not seem at all keen to grab this promotional opportunity. In fact, he told the two that the lodge didn't 'need visitors' and if he wanted a brochure he would have to write a letter. Then he asked them to leave again, and mentioned they were lucky his security staff were out in the helicopter at that moment, or they would already have been thrown out.

Later George described how the Suharto children are moving capital overseas, "taking into consideration that most of their wealth was generated through their father's nepotism which has plunged Indonesia into its worst economic disaster since independence, Wellington should take a deeper look into the Lilybank Lodge and cancel the lease."*

East Timor Independence Campaign Otautahi commemorated on December 5, 1997, the invasion by Indonesia of East Timor with a march in Christchurch. ETIC are pictured on there way to the Qantas offices in Christchurch, to deliver a letter of protest to the Australian Government in regards to their involvement in granting oil exploration licences in the Timor Sea.



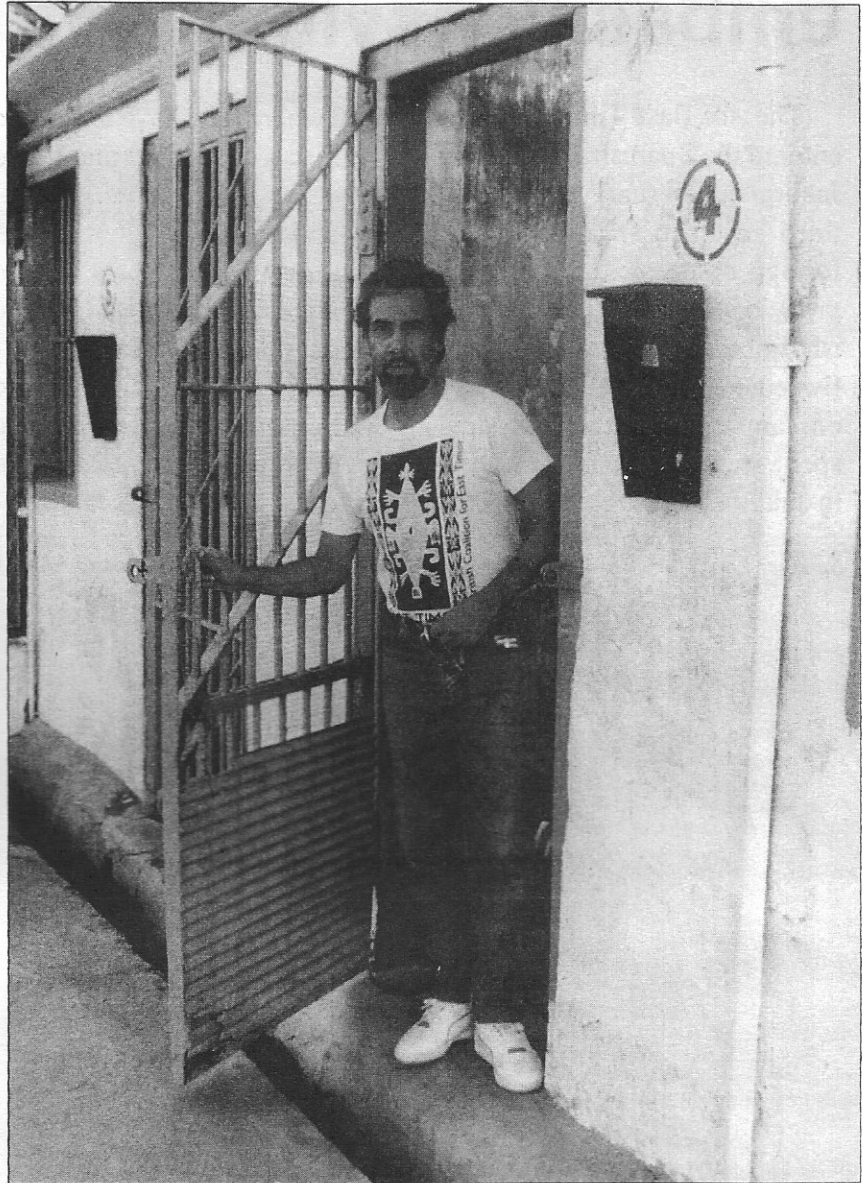
East Timorese Resistance

Resistance leader Commander Xanana Gusmao may be imprisoned in Cipinang Jail in Jakarta but he is far from cut off from the world. Last year he dined with Nelson Mandela.

In April 1998, following a meeting between Xanana and Alfred Nzo, South African Foreign Affairs minister, Mandela urged Suharto to 'speed up' Xanana's release. Reports state that Xanana has had two meetings with Stanley Roth, the US State Department's Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

He meets important people amongst fellow prisoners too — he plays basketball with Wilson, a young Indonesian activist jailed last year with his colleagues in the PRD (Peoples Democratic Party). Inspired by this contact, Wilson recently wrote several moving essays reflecting on the Indonesian and East Timor struggles for justice and freedom.

Photo courtesy Nigel Trolove



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East Timorese continue to seek embassy asylum

The six East Timorese who entered the Spanish Embassy in Jakarta on February 11 were the third group to seek asylum in foreign embassies this year. A group of eight entered the Spanish Embassy on February 28 and five entered the French Embassy on January 15, after they had spent several months in hiding in Jakarta. All are now in Por-

tugal where they have described intimidation, harassment and torture by the Indonesian military and police.

In the last two years around 152 have fled Indonesia via the Embassy asylum route. A further group of six, including two children have been holed up in the Austrian Embassy since September 19 last year since the In-

donesian authorities accuse them of being involved in a bombing network and have refused to allow them to leave.

The Austrian Ambassador Emil Staffelmayr refuses to give the police access to the Embassy, and has said the group will never be handed over. Negotiations between Indonesia and Austria are at stalemate.*

Sender: East Timor Independence Committee, PO Box 68 418, Newton, Auckland

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In Brief

The Free East Timor Coalition Petition calling on the Government to support self-determination for East Timor is now due — please send in your form now!

Resources

Auckland ETIC has a useful resource centre with books, tapes and videos for loan. The excellent booklet put out by APCET *East Timor for Beginners* is in a new edition and costs only \$10.00. If you would like more supplies of our own infor-

mation brochure *East Timor- it's time for action* which was sent out in the last mailing please let us know.

Tee-shirts and Badges

Striking Free East Timor T-shirts all sizes/black with design \$20.00 — Badges \$2.00

Upcoming Events

July 17: 22nd anniversary of the day East Timor was formally integrated by Indonesia - a day of international action - more information to come about local demonstrations.

Torture Photos

On behalf of Labour women, Diane Yates recently issued a Media Release after viewing photos depicting the torture of East Timorese women. She called for New Zealand to desist from military exercises with countries that blatantly breach human rights. Diane has written to clarify that she regards exercises as inclusive of military training. All Alliance women and Ann Batten of NZ First have said they oppose continued NZ military training of Indonesian soldiers.*